

# Research Councils' Career Development and Transferable Skills Training (Roberts') Payments

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## 1 Payments

### 1.1 How did the payments start – why are they made?

In 2001, the Government commissioned a Review of the supply of people with science, technology, engineering and mathematics skills. A report was published in April 2002 (the "[Roberts' Review](#)"). This identified a number of problems in the supply of people with high level skills and recommended a range of measures to nourish and reinvigorate the science and engineering base.

The review identified a mismatch between the skills of graduates and postgraduates and the skills required by employers (for example, application of technical knowledge in a practical environment and transferable skills), and recommended at least two weeks of training per year for PhD students and postdoctoral researchers. The [Science and Innovation Framework \(2004-2014\)](#) included the Government's response to the review (at Annex A). The Government provided additional funding to the Research Councils to deliver additional training. The Career Development and Transferable Skills Training (Roberts') Payments are from this additional funding.

## 1.2 How much money will universities receive?

The overall budget for Career Development and Transferable Skills Training amounts to roughly £20 million. This was based on £850 for each researcher (both research students and research posts on grants) for each academic year.

Following the recommendations made at the UK GRAD Conference in September 2006 and the Policy Forums in 2006 and 2007, there has been a small “top-slice” of funding retained for centrally-funded programmes and projects which further the career planning and development of these researcher staff whose posts are funded through grants. The conference reports are available from the [Vitae website](#).

The budget for researcher development for each Council is divided by the number of Research Council studentships and posts funded through grants. There is a separate mechanism for the AHRC allocation (please see separate section). The amounts for each researcher each year may therefore vary slightly with the numbers of people funded that year through grants and awards. After the top-slice, the calculation of payments is based on an average of around £800 for each researcher each year.

## 1.3 How is the calculation of payment levels done?

The basis for the calculation is the number of research posts and the number of research studentships due to be held in the coming academic year, as known at 15 June the preceding year. For more details on AHRC calculations, please see the section on this (at 1.7).

For example, the payments for 09/10 are based on posts or studentships due to be current in 09/10 (all the ones known on 15 June 09, in time to do the calculations for August 09 announcement). The academic year is taken from 1 Oct - 30 Sept. Any funding announced after 15 June will be taken into account the following year, including grants with research posts; DTA funds or; studentships.

There is some variation in what is known and when for particular schemes (eg studentship allocations, Doctoral Training Grant “notional” numbers, when Industrial CASE numbers are known by host institution rather than by company etc). Each council has tackled these principles according to the data available when the snapshot is taken (15 June each year). Where necessary, arrangements for individual schemes have been put in place to ensure information is taken into account as early as possible, but in a minority of cases, this might not be the year in which the researcher starts.

## 1.4 When will it arrive?

The calculations are made in June, following the snapshot of research grant funding announced and research student funding allocations. Notification of payment levels is issued as soon as possible after this, usually in late July/early August.

The notification details payments which will be made in October and May. Due to the timing of their studentship exercise, the payment by AHRC for studentships is made in December. The AHRC payment for research posts on grants is made in Spring.

## 1.5 Who will the money be sent to?

Funds are transferred by BACS to institution Finance Offices as is normal for all Research Council payments to institutions.

The RCs ask all institutions to nominate an individual who will act as the primary contact for the career development and transferable skills (Roberts') training for PhD students and postdoctoral researchers and also for the payments made. The letter notifying institutions about the payments is sent to the primary contact as well as the finance office.

## 1.6 Will money be top-sliced for national initiatives such as Vitae?

The Research Councils currently fund the Vitae Programme with ca. £3.5M of their baseline funding. The programme was launched on 25 June 2008 and builds on the work and activities of the UK GRAD Programme for postgraduate researchers and the UK Higher Education Researcher Development (UKHERD) network for research staff. The Councils will continue to fund the programme at current levels from baseline funding and this programme will promote and provide access to high quality courses.

The Councils retain the option of using a small proportion of the funding provided by the Government for centrally-funded programmes or projects that contribute to the development of the skills of their PhD students and/or postdoctoral researchers. As mentioned in previous versions of these "Frequently Asked Questions", such expenditure will not amount to more than 10% of the total skills training funding in any academic year.

## 1.7 Why are AHRC payments different?

The Arts and Humanities Research Board became a Research Council in 2005. This was after the Government's response to the Roberts' Review and funding for the career development and transferable skills training payments had been distributed to the, then, six grant-awarding Research Councils (BBSRC, EPSRC, ESRC, MRC, NERC, STFC).

The AHRB decided to allocate research training payments, in line with the other Councils. The Research Training Fund (RTF) was set up in 2004 and was initially paid annually for subject-specific skills. 2006/07 is a transition year in which AHRC payments are for all aspects of the joint skills statement (A-G). From September 2007, the RTF has been for transferable skills training only, as for the other Research Councils.

Though the AHRC RTF is linked to individual student numbers, it is not intended to be spent on the individual training needs of students. The RTF is still intended to support generic training primarily for the benefit of Research Council funded researchers, though the funds should be used in a way that will have as broad an impact as possible on other researchers. It is unlikely that the best use of the fund would be to allocate it to individual students' training needs.

The timing of payments is affected by the mechanism the AHRC uses to allocate the RTF and the timing of the studentship allocation process. For most Councils, allocations (or DTG levels) are known by 15 June. For AHRC, the results of the studentship competition are known towards the end of September. This means that new AHRC studentships cannot be taken into account in the notification issued in August.

The AHRC also makes payments in respect of postdoctoral research staff funded through AHRC research grants. The calculation is based on the posts current on 1 January each year. Information about the payments will be included in the letters issued each Summer regarding payment levels. It should be noted that it refers to a payment made in the previous academic session.

### 1.8 Will the ring-fencing continue?

Feedback indicates that co-ordination of payments to a single point within universities has delivered benefits in raising the profile of transferable skills training within the higher education sector and enabling co-ordination of programmes. There are no plans to change this within the current CSR period.

### 1.9 What about other ways of funding transferable skills training for students?

One question arising recently is whether the postgraduate fee level should be increased to include funding for training. This may encourage other organisations to fund training, if they pay a fee level in line with RC minimum rates. However, it would also mean funding would be delivered with fee payments and therefore could not be identified in quite the same way as at present. There will be consultation during 2009/10 on implications for institutions of different future Roberts' funding scenarios.

### 1.10 Will Full Economic Costing (FEC) change payment levels or delivery?

With Full Economic Costing (FEC) it is expected that institutions are able to calculate the full cost of employing a researcher – this is to ensure the sustainability of their research operations. The provision of career development opportunities for research staff is a component of a sustainable research base, and it could be argued that institutions should be costing the provision of such training into their indirect costs. For further information on FEC and the Transparent Approach to Costing, see [here](#).

It may be useful to distinguish between research organisations developing their research staff to improve research sustainability and capacity, for example by providing technical courses on different facilities or in different research techniques, versus training or experience that enhances skills applicable to a variety of potential employment destinations. The first is relevant to the full costs of employing researchers whilst the second is additional, and an appropriate use of Roberts' payments.

There may be skills relevant to academic practice which are also applicable to other employment destinations (see the Centre for Excellence in Preparing for Academic Practice [website](#)). This would not preclude funding for development of the transferable skills (for researchers in posts funded through Research Council grants) being drawn from Roberts' payments.

### 1.11 Why don't we know payment levels earlier?

The process is as follows:

- Studentship allocations or DTG levels are announced by early Summer

- Snapshot of research student numbers (notional numbers for those funded through DTGs) and research staff posts announced on grants is taken on 15 June
- Each Research Council calculates payment levels
- Information is collated and letters to notify universities are prepared and issued late July/early August
- Payments in October and May for BBSRC, EPSRC, ESRC, MRC, NERC, STFC
- Payments in December for AHRC for students registered on 15 December. Payments in respect of students who have not started or are on suspension on 15 December but, who are registered on 15 May, will be made on 15 May. A maximum of 4 payments will be made in respect of any one award holder.

## 2 Programme Strategy

### 2.1 How can skills training best be integrated into the research degree programme?

This will relate to the institution's strategy for the development of research students. There are resources you will need to consider when reviewing your programme:

- The [QAA Code of Practice](#) for postgraduate research programmes is a statement of good practice that has been endorsed by the higher education community. It includes a section on development of research and other skills.
- Vitae (<http://www.vitae.ac.uk/>) can help find contacts and information:
  - database of practice (available through the web site)
  - Regional Hubs (which build networks, host events such as those about good practice and facilitate sharing of information and materials)

The QAA Special Audit of postgraduate research programmes in England and Northern Ireland found some organisations needed to do more to integrate generic and professional skills training into research degree programmes (see [QAA Special Audit](#), paragraphs 54-75)

### 2.2 How can Roberts' requirements and funding be integrated with existing provisions and institutional requirements?

Research Councils have been making payments since 2003. The information provided by institutions through the annual monitoring arrangements shows that there are practices aimed specifically at improving integration with existing provisions and procedures. Many of these are on the database of practice ([www.vitae.ac.uk/dop](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/dop)).

The question also relates to how institutions have implemented skills development programmes. Vitae Hubs have been building networks of all those with an interest in personal and professional development for doctoral researchers, and contact details are available from the Vitae website. In 2006, several universities commented on the usefulness of discussion groups and good practice events, for example "*The [local] Hub and membership of UKHERD have proved to be excellent forums for learning and sharing ideas and has helped to build good working relationships*"

## 2.3 How should we deal with the issue of whether training is best given generically, or by discipline?

This will relate to the institution's strategy for the development of researchers (both research students and research staff).

Information provided by institutions through annual monitoring indicates that co-ordination of payments to a central point in the university and a notification of payments to the central contact enables a more strategic approach to the programme as a whole and co-ordination with faculty or departmental provisions. It also highlights the benefit of having a senior member of staff (eg at PVC level) to "champion" researcher development.

Where funding is devolved, there is potential for variation in the quality and quantity of provisions. The Research Councils expect organisations to ensure at least minimum levels of provision.

## 3 Programme Development

### 3.1 What is the definition of 'transferable skills'?

The best practical definition is given by sections (C)-(G) of the RCs Joint Statement of Skills Training Requirements for Research Students, which is at appendix 3 to the QAA Code of Practice for postgraduate research programmes (<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/default.asp>).

A Researcher Development Framework is under development, and will provide further guidance as to expectations.

For researchers employed on Research Council funded grants, the Joint Statement of Skills will also provide a useful starting point. Further consideration of whether the practice is appropriate for funding with Roberts' money should address two questions:

- whether it is additional to what is needed for the researcher's project
- whether it is likely to be useful in a variety of employment destinations after the current project i.e. not solely applicable to another similar project.

For research students, the recommendation from the Roberts' review (4.2) included:

- Despite the welcome current moves by the Funding Councils to improve the quality of PhD training, institutions are not adapting quickly enough to the needs of industry or the expectations of potential students.
- HEIs must encourage PhD projects that test or develop the creativity prized by employers.

There is, therefore, emphasis on skills sought by industry in both employees and the academics with whom they collaborate. This will include business awareness and skills to assist knowledge transfer.

## 3.2 Additionality

The funding is for additional activities, rather than those provided as part of normal practice, as part of the regulations regarding research, or in place before the inception of the payments. This may include new practices, or practices enhanced or expanded.

The payments do not replace existing funding, such as that included in DTAs for conference attendance or research training. Nor is this funding to enable organisations to meet obligations or regulations unconnected with the skills agenda, such as health and safety training.

## 3.3 What is the definition of 'training'?

A broad definition can be adopted, which focuses on demonstrable acquisition of skills by a wide variety of means and includes a process of preparation (including identification of learning outcomes), reflection and review. Where formal training is the chosen route, the emphasis should be on quality, relevance and timeliness.

One example is demonstrating or teaching by research students. It may, by analogy, help with other questions. The background and expectations for Research Council funded research students includes:

- Demonstration and teaching provides valuable experience that should be available to students wherever possible
- Teaching/demonstration should be optional
- Students will be paid for teaching/demonstration.
- That this kind of duty will not exceed 6 hours/week (on average).

However, appropriate guidance and support will be provided for students who undertake teaching (QAA Code of Practice for postgraduate research programmes, section 20, refers) and research organisations will wish to consider opportunities for students to reflect on their learning.

So the personal or professional development of the student may include shadowing, workshops or formal training to acquire teaching skills and techniques. Provided it is additional to normal or pre-existing practice (ie what the university would provide if Roberts' payments were not available) it may be counted towards the "two weeks" target for Career Development and Transferable Skills Training.

## 3.4 What about conferences?

Roberts' funding is appropriate for preparation and debriefing activities to maximise skills development from attendance at conferences, but other sources of funding should be used for fees and expenses. The Research Councils have funding streams to support conference attendance and Roberts' payments do not replace these.

For further information, see:

[AHRC Guide for Award Holders](#)

[BBSRC](#), [EPSRC](#) and [MRC](#) Doctoral Training Account Terms and Conditions/guidance notes

[ESRC Postgraduate Funding Guide](#)

[STFC Postgraduate Studentship Rules and Regulations](#)

[NERC studentships handbook](#)

### 3.5 If the definition of skills training is broader than ‘courses’ how do institutions ensure that students genuinely receive it?

This relates to how a research organisation maintains a record of research student or research staff development and assesses or monitors progress. Institutions will provide opportunities for research students to maintain a record of personal progress, which includes reference to the development of research and other skills (QAA Code of Practice for postgraduate research programmes, Precept 20, refers).

In the 2008 monitoring of the use of Roberts’ payments, more than half the reporting universities mentioned that Professional Development Logs, Personal Development Plans etc are available or expected for research students.

### 3.6 How do we implement this within the spirit of the Roberts’ recommendations?

For example, how do we motivate students to develop their generic skills within the context of Roberts’? How can we share good practice and not re-invent wheels? How do we develop an effective training needs analysis?

These questions relate to the way in which programmes have been developed and are being implemented within your institution. Since the inception of these payments in 2003, many universities have developed programmes and some are being evaluated or have been reviewed.

Facilitating sharing of good practice is one of the specific objectives of the Vitae programme funded by the Research Councils. To engage with institutions in your region and learn more about practices being developed or in place elsewhere, contact your local Vitae Hub.

There are also examples of existing practice on the database of practices developed by Vitae and hosted on the website. A list of contacts for the Vitae Regional Hubs can also be found on the Vitae website <http://vitae.ac.uk/policy-practice/1713/Regional-Hubs.html>.

### 3.7 How can we use personal development plans effectively within research degree programmes?

The QAA Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes includes (at precept 20) “Institutions will provide opportunities for research students to maintain a record of personal progress, which includes reference to the development of research and other skills”. For further information, see the code of practice at:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/default.asp>.

### 3.8 How can we deliver programmes for a diverse group?

This question relates to the implementation of skills development programmes by institutions. The opportunity to receive additional training in generic skills should be open

to all students including those who are part-time, international and mature students. Delivery of transferable skills training should not be vastly different from providing research training to these same groups.

## **4 Researchers in posts funded through Research Council grants**

### **4.1 What are the key personal and professional development needs for this group?**

Excerpts from the recommendation from SET for Success for research staff:

“It is important for postdoctoral researchers to be able to develop individual career paths, reflecting the different career destinations – Industrial, Academic and Research Associate – open to them.... and [this review recommends] postdoctoral researchers have a clear career development plan and have access to appropriate training opportunities – for example, of at least two weeks per year.”

The full document is available at: [http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/ent\\_res\\_roberts.htm](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/ent_res_roberts.htm)

So whilst the emphasis for research students is on employability, the focus for research staff is more on career planning and using this to identify appropriate development and training. The joint skills statement may, however, provide some useful prompts.

The Research Councils need a skilled and motivated workforce to maintain a healthy and vibrant research sector and undertake research projects funded through grants. The overarching aim is therefore on the skills that equip researchers to do research better and manage the research activity within higher education or elsewhere.

Consideration of whether the practice is appropriate for funding with Roberts' money should address two questions:

- whether it is additional to what is needed for the researcher's current project
- whether it is likely to be useful in a variety of employment destinations

The Research Careers and Diversity Strategy ([www.rcuk.ac.uk/rescareer/strategy.htm](http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/rescareer/strategy.htm)) notes that additional skills may include knowledge transfer, quantitative methods, inter-disciplinarity, entrepreneurship, participation in RCUK's Researchers in Residence scheme and engagement with public and schools.

Skills for inter-disciplinarity might, for example, include methods to develop a broader awareness of research to identify areas where there may be benefit in tackling research problems jointly. There may also be issues regarding terminology and language used in different research subjects which training might address.

In addition to obtaining feedback from their own research staff and the Career Services and support staff who work with them, research organisations may wish to consider:

- documentation produced as a result of the Research Careers Initiative (<http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/AboutUs/AssociatedOrganisations/Partnerships/Pages/Research-Careers-Initiative.aspx>)
- the Career Development Pack for postdoctoral researchers developed by EPSRC (details from the EPSRC website, [www.epsrc.ac.uk](http://www.epsrc.ac.uk))

In considering their career development plan, research staff may wish to consider the skills needed for academic practice:

- The Joint Negotiating Committee for Higher Education Staff has produced academic role profiles and these are available through the [University and Colleges Employers Association website](#).
- The Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) in Academic Practice hosted by the Oxford Learning Centre at Oxford University offers information on its website (<http://www.learning.ox.ac.uk/cetl.php>).

#### 4.2 How can we ensure an integrated approach for research students and research staff?

This question relates to the implementation of skills development programmes by institutions and how decisions about integration are taken by individual research organisations. Vitae is a useful source of information and contacts.

Organisations should promote co-ordination between research student and research staff programmes as this will maximise benefit from the funding.

#### 4.3 Do AHRC make payments for researchers on grants?

The AHRC makes payments in respect of postdoctoral research staff funded through AHRC research grants. The calculation is based on the posts current on 1 January each year. Information about the payments will be included in letters regarding payment levels. This will be in a separate table, to highlight that the information refers to a payment made in the previous academic session.

## 5 Equality of provision for RC and non-RC funded students and postdoctoral researchers

### 5.1 To what extent can the Roberts' money be used to support non RC-funded students and postdoctoral researchers?

The Councils' funding is primarily for the benefit of Research Council funded researchers. The Councils wish to foster a productive and healthy research base, thus use of the funds in a way that has broader impact is seen as constructive, but this should not be at the expense of Research Council funded researchers.

## 5.2 Will the Funding Councils provide similar funding for non-RC funded students?

The Funding Councils provide a financial contribution for all “home” or “EU” PhD students via the teaching, supervision, and research funding streams of the block grant. This is irrespective of funding source. The Funding Councils do not provide funding specifically for transferable skills training of PhD students.

The Research Councils received funding from Government for the researchers funded through their own research studentship routes and research posts on Research Council funded grants. Institutions should seek funding for additional skills training of non-RC funded research students and research staff from other sponsors of PhD training and research, to match that provided through the Research Councils.

## 5.3 How can we ensure that all students and postdoctoral researchers have access to high quality training?

Universities may need to consider whether all sponsors of PhD training and research provide the additional funding required and the scope for including the costs of staff training and development in grant proposals.

The Concordat to Support the Career Management of Researchers sets out the expectations of the major research funding bodies in the UK for the career development and training of researchers. <http://www.researchconcordat.ac.uk/>

# 6 How do we ensure the engagement of supervisors?

## 6.1 Can Roberts’ funding be used for supervisor training?

Funding provided by the RCs for additional training of PhD students and postdoctoral researchers should not be used for supervisor training, unless it is part of a ‘cascade’ system of training where professional trainers train supervisors to enable them to impart specific generic skills to groups of PhD students.

## 6.2 How do we encourage supervisors to engage in the personal and professional development for researchers?

For information on the ways in which organisations have addressed this issue, or to get involved in workshops or events where this question arises, contact your local Vitae Hub.

The QAA Code of Practice for research degree programmes also makes it clear that institutions should be enabling supervisors to update their skills:

“Institutions will expect existing supervisors to demonstrate their continuing professional development through participation in a range of activities designed to support their work as supervisors. Supervisors should take the initiative in updating their knowledge and skills, supported by institutional arrangements that define and enable sharing of good practice and provide advice on effective support for different types of student.” (From Precept 11)

## 7 How will RCs monitor the use of Roberts' money?

The Research Councils have agreed that the monitoring of the use of Career Development and Skills Training will be "light touch and proportionate".

We are now in the sixth year of payments and monitoring arrangements. Currently, we gather information each November through monitoring reports and the Database of Practice. Information is available at [www.rcuk.ac.uk/rescareer/rcdu/training.htm](http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/rescareer/rcdu/training.htm).

In addition to a financial summary, universities will be asked to provide a summary about the processes followed and their impact on the training of researchers:

- Process for reviewing strategy and building the skills development programme. This should include reference to:
  - the management framework
  - the involvement of employers and other stakeholders
  - how researcher feedback is used
- Commentary on the range of career development and training opportunities and approximate proportion of research students and research-only employees participating.
- How researchers are encouraged to consider their career development and training needs and reflect on their skills.
- Innovations in the last year and any areas for future development.
- Any examples of sharing processes or practices with other organisations.

The monitoring arrangements have been informed by the work of the "Rugby Team". This is a sector-led working group formed following the January 2005 UK GRAD Roberts' Policy Forum, one of the aims of which was to contribute to a strategic debate with national stakeholders on how to evaluate the effectiveness of skills development amongst research students and research staff. Information about the Rugby Team is available from the Vitae website at [www.vitae.ac.uk/rugbyteam](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/rugbyteam).

### 7.1 Will AHRC continue to request separate reports?

No. From 2007 a single report to RCUK will be required.

### 7.2 How will the Research Councils expect the universities to demonstrate value for money?

The RCs will be looking to publicise examples of good value approaches. It is assumed that institutions will wish to maximise the effectiveness of the training they are able to provide with the funding, for the benefit of their researchers.

### 7.3 How can we measure the effectiveness of skills training?

The focus should be on provision of skills development opportunities that are likely to be of immediate benefit to PhD students and postdoctoral researchers and/or have a clear link to future employability, with close attention to nature, timing and quality of training provided. In January 2006, the Rugby Team prepared a strategy paper on evaluating the effectiveness of skills development and this has been published on the Vitae website.

#### 7.4 How will employers' perceptions of the impact of/value added by skills training be measured?

The RCs anticipate that individual institutions will be alert to the expectations of employers and, where appropriate, will seek their views on the generic and professional skills needs of researchers, to ensure that their training provision is fit for purpose and relevant.

From 2007/08, AHRC payments will be for transferable skills training only, as for the other Research Councils (see sections c-g of the joint skills statement), and the additional page previously required on AHRC funds is no longer necessary.

The AHRC will continue to ask for details of research training in the final reports submitted by individual doctoral award holders.

#### 7.5 What will RCs do if the monitoring isn't satisfactory?

If reports are delayed or there are concerns about the information provided, they will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis. Any issues would be raised with the university by email in the first instance. If monitoring reports have not been received or are incomplete, the escalation procedure might then include:

- Visit or call by RCDU staff and a member of one of the councils
- A requirement to produce an outline of the action proposed by the research organisation

Research Councils will then reserve the option to:

- Delay (hold) payments until a satisfactory outline is received
- Exclude the organisation from payments the following year

#### 7.6 Some universities receive large sums, is there any extra monitoring for them?

There are instances where the scale of career development and transferable skills training (Roberts') payments indicates some activities in addition to annual monitoring would be appropriate. It has been agreed that there should be a series of visits to the recipients of the largest payments, to co-ordinate with annual monitoring arrangements.

The main purpose is to facilitate sharing of practices which have worked well, as well as identify common issues and constraints. In visiting the recipients of the largest Roberts' payments, the intention is to promote the sharing of information between universities and for the Research Councils to gain a better understanding of the context in which programmes are developed and delivered and how practices impact on research students and research staff.

## 8 Terms and References:

### 8.1 Research Staff Terminology

Researchers in posts funded through research grants have, in various documents, also been referred to as postdocs, contract research staff or CRS, research assistants or RAs and fixed-term research staff. Following the Fixed Term Working regulations and

publication of the EU Code and Charter for researchers, some of these terms need updating.

Generally, early stage researchers are those within 5 years of starting a PhD, early career researchers those within 10 years of starting a PhD. Researchers in posts funded through research grants are referred to as research staff and Principle Investigators (on research grants) as academic staff.

The terminology is not perfect. For example, research staff primarily employed on research grant funded projects may undertake some teaching or other duties. Students may be employed whilst undertaking doctoral studies.

EU Code and Charter is available through the European Researcher's Mobility Portal ([EURAXESS](#)).

Information on fixed-term working regulations is available from the [Directgov](#) or [Business Link](#) websites .

## 8.2 Roberts' Review

The Roberts' Review, "SET for success: the supply of people with science, technology, engineering and mathematics skills", and the Government's response are available [here](#).

The recommendations which particularly relate to career development and transferable skills training are given below:

### **Recommendation 4.2: PhD training elements**

Despite the welcome current moves by the Funding Councils to improve the quality of PhD training, institutions are not adapting quickly enough to the needs of industry or the expectations of potential students. The Review therefore believes that the training elements of a PhD – particularly training in transferable skills – need to be strengthened considerably. In particular, the Review recommends that HEFCE and the Research Councils, as major funders of PhD students, should make all funding related to PhD students conditional on students' training meeting stringent minimum standards. These minimum standards should include the provision of at least two weeks' dedicated training a year, principally in transferable skills, for which additional funding should be provided and over which the student should be given some control. There should be no requirement on the student to choose training at their host institution. The minimum standards should also include the requirement that HEIs – and other organisations in which PhD students work – reward good supervision of PhD students, and ensure that these principles are reflected in their human resources strategies and staff appraisal processes.

Furthermore, in order to assure employers of the quality of PhD students, as part of these standards the Review recommends that institutions should introduce or tighten their procedures for the transfer of students to the PhD. In particular, the Review believes that HEIs must encourage PhD projects that test or develop the creativity prized by employers.

### **Recommendation 5.3: A vision for postdoctoral researchers**

It is important for postdoctoral researchers to be able to develop individual career paths, reflecting the different career destinations – Industrial, Academic and Research Associate – open to them, and that funding arrangements reflect the development of these career paths. The Review believes that enabling the individual to establish a clear career path, and a development plan to take them along it, is critical to improving the attractiveness of postdoctoral research. The Review therefore recommends that HEIs take responsibility for ensuring that all their postdoctoral researchers have a clear career development plan and have access to appropriate training opportunities – for example, of at least two weeks per year. The Review further recommends that all relevant funding from HEFCE and the Research Councils be made conditional on HEIs implementing these recommendations.

### 8.3 Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004-2014

Documents relating to the Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004-2014 are available on the [Treasury website](#).

The Next Steps document is available [here](#), and the Annual Report 2008 is available from the [BIS website](#).

### 8.4 RCUK Research Careers and Diversity Strategy

Is available at: <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/rescareer/strategy.htm>

### 8.5 Vitae Programme

The UK GRAD programme ran to June 2008. The Vitae programme was launched on 25 June 2008 and builds on the work and activities of the UK GRAD Programme for postgraduate researchers and the UK Higher Education Researcher Development (UKHERD) network for research staff.